

The Prince of Court-Poets

105

As for the wild deer:

Je mourrois de plaisir voyant en ces beaux
mois
Debusquer au matin le Chevreuil tors du bois.

One more illustration must suffice—the
most masterly
tie-goat that pen—or pencil—ever drew:

Je gage mon grand bouc, qui par mont et par
plaine
Conduit seul un troupeau comme un grand
Capitaine:
Il est fort, hardy, corpulent et puissant,
Brusque, prompt, esveille', sautant et
bondissant,
Qui grate en se joiant de l'ergot de derriere
(Regardant les passans) sa barbe mentonniere:
Il a le front severe et le pas mesure',
La contenance fiere et l'oeil bien assure:
Il ne doute les loups, tant soient ils redoutables,
Ny les mastins armez de colliers effroyables,
Mais plants' sur le haut d'un rocher espineux
Les regarde passer, et si se mocque d'eux.

One of the most famous works of the
Greek sculptor
Myron was a cow; Ronsard's view of Nature
is extra-
ordinarily Greek—I know nothing like it
before Chenier
—not merely in its resurrection of Aegipan
and Oread,
but in this simple directness of vision. On
the misty
green world of Langland the
Mediterranean sun of
Hesiod has risen again. Ronsard does not
break his ants'
backs with drawing ponderous morals. He
does not
vaporise his lark from a bird into a spirit.
These brooks
'have no books soaking in them; these stones
no dog-eared
sermons. If they have a message ever, it is the
simple and
eternal one of man's transience and Nature's
careless
immortality. This in itself is no small
blessing. With all
Wordsworth's merits, one may be haunted in
his nature-
poetry by the feeling of being shown round a
very large

caij^dral by a very solemn verger who
never forgets
to point in the register to Nature's highly
respectable
marriage-lines. And Nature is not
respectable.